

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE IAC AGENCIES

1. An obvious limitation on the quality of the contributions from the agencies is the lack of time to prepare adequate contributions. Not much can be done about this, except to plan the schedule of NIEs to minimize the number of over-lapping NIEs, "space" them better, and the like.
2. Lack of personnel, particularly of specialists who are able to follow in detail the developments in their areas, is an acute problem. By way of illustration: There are numerous reports of friction between the Chinese Communists and the Russians. These reports come from sources widely differing in their reliability. Similarly, there are reports with respect to the presence of Soviet personnel in various locations in China. In both instances, if there were specialists who could follow these reports day by day and catalogue them, they would develop a "feel" for the authenticity of these reports as well as some sense of a general picture. As it is, only a kind of blurred uncertainty seems to exist.

For their part, the contributing agencies suggest that their contributions could be handled better in O/NE by area or other

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specialists, with our "report writers" coming in only at a later stage in developing the NIEs.

3. There is apparently inadequate liaison between the intelligence branches and between the intelligence agencies and operations branches. Likewise so little seems to come to the agencies from the field. For example, we get almost no information with regard to the quality of the Chinese Communist troops in Korea from the contractions. How much training have most of these troops had? What proportion of them are veterans of the Nationalist armies? What proportion are veterans of the Communist armies which defeated the Nationalists? What proportion are green conscripts? Answers to these questions are needed in NIE-32 in order to indicate the possibility of the Chinese Communists replacing their losses in Korea. Answers could be got from prisoner interrogation. This information probably exists in the field. It does not come to us.

Similarly, it would be of great value to know about the loyalty of the armies and security forces in the Middle East. This question arose first in the case of Iran. Is the loyalty of the army and security forces there primarily to the Shah or is it to whomever is Premier at the moment? Are the security forces as loyal to Premier Mossadeq as they were to Razmara or to Ali?

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Would they be "loyal" to a Jewish government? Such questions might well be directed to the military attaches in all Middle Eastern countries so that the information would be available when required.

This illustrates the point that we may not know just what information is required in a particular NIE until we have met with the representatives of the agencies. However, the agencies might well pick up ideas about general questions to send out to the field for answer as a result of deficiencies developed when preparing past NIEs. (As this report was being written G-2 supplied O/NE with a detailed report on this very subject as a result of this point having been raised in an IAC meeting.)

4. It is essential that the contributing agencies furnish supporting evidence for the significant points on which they make estimates. It would be of the greatest value even where no evidence or meagre evidence exists or is available, if such could be stated.

5. In drawing up terms of reference O/NE is always confronted by a dilemma. If the questions asked are general in nature, only general replies may be made. If the questions are detailed, these questions may be interpreted in the narrowest sense and only these questions answered. In the latter case information which is of first importance and which exists may not be made available. The agencies have been told and no doubt need

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to be assured from time to time, that the questions asked in the terms of reference are only suggestive and that the specialists of the contributing agencies should volunteer pertinent evidence even when such evidence is not specifically asked for.

6. In general it seems undesirable to ask the contributing agencies for data which they do not have and are unlikely to be able to get. The danger is that the agencies will "give the best answer they can think up." Once having given such an answer, the contributing agency is under the temptation to stand on its answer, even if other information or a more logical estimate would indicate that the agency's "best guess" was wrong.

7. In general, the agencies should not be asked to make contributions on matters outside their fields. Estimates outside the field of special competence are bound to take place in meetings with the IAC representatives, but "asking for it" in the contributions compounds this difficulty.

8. One of the most serious difficulties in getting contributions is the objection of the defense agencies that we are "getting into operations" or are "war gaming." This extremely important matter is outside the scope of this committee's report.

9. There is a tendency on the part of the agencies to quote past JIC or other reports as authority in place of digging up new data. This saves work and avoids trouble for the agency

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representative. Up to a point it is a good thing. If our NIEs are not consistent with past reports we should know it and know why the divergence exists. There is a danger, however, that the contributions become "quotes" rather than new data, and that quotes will be used by the representatives of one of the agencies to intimidate the representatives of others on some controversial point.

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